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IOWA MAN RECEIVES TWO-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE
IN INTERNET SOFTWARE PIRACY CONSPIRACY

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono and Kenneth W. Kaiser, Special Agent in Charge of the Boston Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced that Christopher Motter, date of birth 10-31-76, of 1300 Coconino Rd. Apt. #11, Ames, Iowa, was sentenced to serve 2 years in federal prison for his role in an Internet based software piracy ring. Motter had previously pled guilty to charges that he conspired with others to violate federal copyright laws through Internet based software piracy.

Motter is one of the first to be charged, convicted and sentenced as a result of a two-year undercover operation known as "Operation Digital Piratez" run in New Hampshire by the FBI's Boston-based Computer Squad. During the course of the undercover operation, agents and cooperating witnesses discovered several Internet based computer servers, known as "warez servers" run by groups of software pirates, and secret Internet Relay Chat channels used by those involved to communicate in real time about their software piracy activities. Warez servers exist for the exclusive illegal purpose of storing, copying, and reproducing, world-wide copyright protected software. They serve no legitimate purpose.

In December, 2001, the FBI executed ten search warrants, and obtained consent for additional searches, on computers located in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire and Virginia. Since then agents have been analyzing seized computer data and conducting followup investigations to further identify those involved.

Motter ran and maintained one of those warez servers which had been seized. It was located in Ames, Iowa, and was known to his co-conspirators as the warez server "Wonderland." At the sentencing hearing today, the government advised United States District Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr., that "Wonderland" had over 5,000 illegally pirated software applications stored within its 400 gigabytes of memory. It had over 40 active users/co-conspirators from across the country, including New Hampshire. As a representative sample of the value of the software on the server, the government advised the Court that a mere 53 applications, less than 1% of the total software on the server, had a retail value of more than \$500,000.

After the sentence was announced, U.S. Attorney Tom Colantuono said: “Many individuals and companies, small and large alike in New Hampshire, are involved in the development and distribution of new software applications. Our federal copyright laws give those individuals and companies certain rights in that intellectual property, designed in part to encourage development which contributes to the betterment of society. Those who steal protected intellectual property, like the defendant and his co-conspirators here, hurt not only those entrepreneurs who develop the software, and rely upon sales of that software for their livelihood, but they hurt all of society. Who among us will spend the time and money, sometimes millions of dollars, necessary to develop new software applications if those applications are simply to be stolen by software pirates? This office and the FBI will continue to vigorously enforce the copyright laws as they apply to Internet based intellectual property here in New Hampshire.”

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Arnold Huftalen.